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**SECRETARY DURAND DEDICATES YELICK FARM AS CONSERVATION AREA  
AND LEADS FISH STOCKING ON THE ASSABET RIVER IN NORTHBOROUGH**

NORTHBORO – Bob Durand, Secretary of Environmental Affairs, today dedicated 73 acres of preserved open space on both sides of the Assabet River in the name of the late Michael P. Yellick, who died last year at age 53.

“Mike Yellick and I shared many of the same passions. Mike had a tremendous respect for our natural resources and a love of the outdoors and outdoor sports, in particular, fishing and hunting,” Secretary Durand said. “He was a lifelong environmentalist who learned early a reverence for the biodiversity in Massachusetts.”

Michael Yellick, a lifelong Marlborough resident, was a professional bass fisherman and was well known throughout New England for his fishing shows, seminars and fishing lures named after him. He was also an avid deer hunter. His family owned the parcel Secretary Durand dedicated in his name, the former Yellick Farm. The farm was purchased by the state as part of the Tyler Flood Control Facility off of Hudson Street, completed in 1980.

Following the dedication, Secretary Durand and David Peters, Commissioner of the Department of Fisheries, Wildlife & Environmental Law Enforcement, and students from Hudson and Algonquin high schools stocked the Assabet River with 300 brook, brown, and rainbow trout.

“This is a great way to introduce students to the wonder and beauty of our natural resources, and can have a lasting impact in making our kids stewards for the environment,” said Secretary Durand. “As someone who grew up on this river and someone who has seen it at its worst, I am particularly pleased that the water quality improvements now allow us to put trout in the Assabet again.”

“This is proof that there have been great improvements in the quality of the Assabet River,” said Commissioner Peters. “The trout stocking program is also immensely popular with anglers throughout Massachusetts and provides exceptional recreational opportunities for residents and tourists.”

*MassWildlife* stocked the Assabet River in 1999 for the first time in several decades due to the improved water quality in the river, and anglers and river watchers reported good results the last two years. The Division of Fisheries & Wildlife, or *MassWildlife*, is stocking about 630,000 trout in more than 500 lakes, ponds, rivers and streams this spring for the benefit of sport anglers in Massachusetts.

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